

Sketch

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Are You Listening?

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A Star In The Sky

E. Patricia Maveety

H. Ec. '39

Last night there was a blue-white, crystal star
Suspended in the velvet black of sky;
A brilliant, shining spot of light, and far
Below, the singing carolers passed by.
A holly wreath; the chiming bells with slow,
Deep chords; a gayly lighted, cone-shaped tree;
A candle's wavering pattern on the snow;
These brought the peace of Christmas close to me.

Tonight the street is silent, chill, and dark;
Devoid of lighted trees, or bells that chime,
Or joyous carols far away to mark
The promise, hope, and love of Christmas time.
With heavy, aching heart I watch and sigh,
"Is Christmas gone?"—The star is in the sky.

Are You Listening?

Robert Morgan

S. '40

"OH, HELLO, Dennis; on time, I see."

"Anne, dear, I'm awfully sorry. You know it's..."

"Oh, yes, of course, I know. You had to be at 232 at three o'clock, you just had to get that book on materials in the library before four-thirty, you have a paper to write—and then you met Bob Hill and that awful hag he goes with, and you had to be social, of course!"

Snapping blue eyes brimming with icy verve met, and held for a moment, soft, brown, sincere ones—deep-set beside a thin, firm nose. Dennis opened his mouth about to speak, then looked at Anne appealingly, almost child-like.

"Oh, but, Anne; after all, I have some things to do—you shouldn't mind, really you know."

Dennis ran his finger through the mouse-colored fur on her coat collar, and studiously watched the hairs of the fur spring back in place to leave only a slight trace of where his finger had been. He pursed his lips, and then said very quietly, with almost subtle nonchalance, "Shall we go have coffee, or almost anything you might want, Annie, m' gal?"

ANNE reflected hesitation for only a moment as she looked beyond Dennis. The blue ice melted a little.

"All right, but remember, it's the woman's privilege to keep a man waiting, but you'd better not try it on me, or one of these days you'll find yourself stringing along behind."

He took her by the arm, smiled disarmingly, and half shoved, half led her through the shuffling, jabbering crowd at the doorway. He found a secluded corner just beyond the doorway—a spot where they could see, and yet not be seen by the back and forth flow of people. He helped her with her coat, held her chair for her, then stood gazing abstractly around the room before her voice broke in with a crisp "Nice weather we're having."

Dennis grinned good naturedly, arched his eyebrows, and assented, "Not bad, not bad at all." Then, giving her his best attention, he sat down opposite her and proceeded to examine very carefully the minute cross chains of the gold bracelet on her left wrist. Somewhere inside Anne felt a tingling warmth when he touched her. Something about Dennis—maybe everything—completely disarmed her every time he was with her. She knew it, and yet, why did she always try to fool him, to hurt him with her smoothly veneered shell of sophisticated flippancy?

"Order?" The waiter watched them, waiting, his pencil poised.

"Oh, yes, a . . . well, I do believe that the young lady wants a cup of coffee, and . . ."

"A milk for the little boy, waiter!" Anne's smile to the waiter was saccharine.

ANNE thought she saw a little point in Dennis' eyes, a point of light, snap out as if the switch had been flipped. God, she'd done it, or she'd do it soon at this rate. Why did she have to be so damned funny, so bright, when she was a miserable flop, and she knew it! She knew when they met at the fireside when she was with Howard that she had intrigued Dennis with her neat

appearance, her smooth lively line. She knew all the answers—Miss Smarty!

"Anne, there might be a dance Saturday night, if you'd care to go with me."

"There'll be one anyway."

"Well, do you think you'd care to go?" He was speculative.

"In desperation—possibly yes. I always hate to be one of the lost one thousand around the house on Saturday night."

Dennis drummed slightly on the table with his fingers; a tiny jaw muscle did a back flip.

"The bid's still open—do I hear it going?"

"I'm particular about whom I let wreck my shoes!"

"Well—can't say as I seem to be."

Ann searched his eyes, carefully, desperately for a fleeting instant before she said very softly, very sincerely, "Did I hear the hammer, Dennis?"

"If you're not deaf."

Departure

Jean Spencer

H. Ec. '39

Tomorrow I will leave these things I've known;
This room with friendly dark about my bed,
This house in which the three of us have grown
And now must part for different homes instead.
Tomorrow I'll remember what is past;
Croquet balls on the black and level ground,
The overhanging maples, shadows cast
In pudgy figures, squatty, gnomelike, round.
Or quiet of a summer evening—late,
With glint of moon on shining cherry trees
As grouped upon the grassy lawn we wait
For hint of coolness in the hot, dry breeze.
When I return I shall enjoy it best.
If I may be myself—and not a guest.